

PRESS RELEASE

November 2, 2006

RE: UNITED STATES v. FRANKIE JOHNSON

United States Attorney Terrance P. Flynn announced today that FRANKIE JOHNSON, 48, of Buffalo, New York, pled guilty before the Hon. John T. Elfvin, United States District Court Judge, to a two count information charging a violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 848(a), Continuing Criminal Enterprise, and violating Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(h), Laundering of Monetary Instruments. The maximum penalty Johnson can face is life imprisonment.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael DiGiacomo, who handled the case, stated that the defendant ran a large-scale marijuana distribution ring in the City of Buffalo. The operation was run like a business in the sense that Johnson employed and supervised individuals to work the houses used to sell the marijuana. Each employee was paid, in cash, based upon the number of days and hours they worked a distribution house. Some of the marijuana houses were operated 24 hours a day and produced thousands of dollars in cash each day. Johnson would use the additional money he made to purchase jewelry, cars, and property. As part of the plea agreement, Johnson agreed to forfeit various properties and money.

Also, a money judgment in the amount \$1,000,000 was obtained against Johnson.

The plea resulted from a joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent In Charge Laurie J. Bennett; the Internal Revenue Service, under the direction of Special Agent In Charge Anne Marie Coons; the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Resident Agent In Charge Nancy Coté; and the New York State Police, under the direction of Major Michael Manning.

Sentencing is scheduled for February 23, 2007, before the Hon. John T. Elfvin.